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Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8564
INFO CINCPAC
USLO PEKING
AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY TOKYO

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 0657

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, CH, HK, APUB
SUBJECT: LOW-KEYED COMMEMORATION OF CHOU'S DEATH ANNIVERSARY

REF: (A) PEKING 83, (B) PEKING 104

SUMMARY: THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF CHOU EN-LAI'S DEATH PASSED IN HONG KONG WITHOUT ANY REPORTED MEETINGS OR CEREMONIES TO MARK THE OCCASION. AS IN PEKING, THE ANNIVERSARY MANILY SERVED AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO DRAW ATTENTION TO THE APRIL 1976 TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT. ARTICLES IN A LOCAL RO-PEKING MONTHLY SEEM TO IMPLY CRITICISM OF THE ROLE PLAYED IN THE INCIDENT BY WU TEH, CHEN HSI-LIEN AND SEVERAL OTHER CURRENT LEADERS.
END SUMMARY.

1. THIRTEEN "PRECIOUS PHOTOS OF THE ITEN AN MEN INCIDENT", PROBABLY SOME OF THE SAME PHOTOS WHICH NOW ARE DISPLAYED IN TIEN AN MEN SQUARE (REFTELS), WERE PRINTED IN THE JANURY 5 EDITION OF HSIN WAN PAO, A LOCAL PRC-
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CONTROLLED DAILY. MOST OF THEE PHOTOS SHOW WREATHS TO MOURN CHOU PLACED IN THE SQUARE AT THAT TIME. THE NEWSPAPER SAID THE PHOTOS WERE PROVIDED BY "PERSONNEL FROM VARIOUS UNITS IN PEKING" WHO HAD "KEPT THEM UNDERGROUND" IN ORDER TO PRESERVE "THE SCENES OF GREAT HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE."

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2. ANOTHER LOCAL PRC-CONTROLLED NEWSPAPER, TA KUNG PAO, ANNOUNCED IN ITS JANUARY 8 AND 9 EDITIONS THAT IN COMMEMORATION OF CHOU'S DEATH A LEFTIST BOOK DISTRIBUTOR HERE IS SELLING "COLLECTION OF TIEN AN MEN REVOLUTIONARY POEMS", A 344-PAGE BOOK OF POEMS READ AND DISPLAYED DURING THE 1976 DEMONSTRATION. CONGEN HAS OBTAINED COPIES OF THE BOOK, WHICH IS DESCRIBED ON THE COVER AS A PHOTOCOPY OF THE MAY 1977 SECOND FOREIGN LANGUAGE COLLEGE WORK DESCRIBED IN REFTEL B. COPIES OF THE HONG KONG EDITION WILL BE POUCHED TO USLO AND DEPARTMENT.

3. THE ONLY ORIGINAL LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHOU COMMEMORATION WERE THREE ARTICLES ON THE TIEN AN MEN INCIDENT IN THE JANUARY EDITION OF CHENG MING, A LOCAL PRO-PEKING MAGAZINE WHICH BEGAN PBULCIATION IN NOVEMBER. ACCORDING TO A JAPANESE CONGEN SOURCE, TWO OF THE THREE ARTICLES WERE WRITTEN BY A FORMER ACADEMY OF SCIENCES EMPLOYEE WHO CAME TO HONG KONG ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO TO WORK FOR CHENG MING.

4. AN EDITOR'S NOTE TO THE CHENG MING ARTICLES DRAWS ATTENTION TO SOME OF THEIR "REVELATIONS";

-- IN THE EARLY MORNING OF APRIL 4 WANG HUNG-WEN WENT TO TIEN AN MEN SQUARE TO INSPECT THE WORK OF CONFIDENTIAL

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MOVING AWAY THE WREATHS MOURNING CHOU, THE ACT WHICH PROVOKED THE RIOTS.

-- CHANG CHUN-CHIAO, HIDING IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE PEOPLE, DIRECTED THE MILITIAMEN WHO ATTACKED THE DEMONSTRATORS. HE WROTE TO HIS DAUGHTER THAT THE RIOT WOULD LEAD TO TENG HSIAO-PING'S FALL.

-- THE MASSES' VIOLENT PROTEST HAD BEEN PROVOKED BY A SELF-PROFESSED MEMBER OF THE "WORKER'S MILITIA" WHO TOLD THE CROWD THAT "CHOU EN-LAI IS THE BIGGEST CAPITALIST ROADER."

THE EDITOR CONCLUDED THAT THESE REVELATIONS SHOW THAT THE "GANG OF FOUR" HD PRVOKED THE ITEN AN MEN INCIDENT FOR THE PURPOSE OF OVERTHROWING TENG.

5. THE ARTICLES CONTAIN PASSAGES WHICH SEEM TO IMPLY CRITICISM OF ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE INCIDENT AND ITS AFTERMATH BY SEVERAL CURRENT POLITBURO MEMBERS. THE LEAD ARTICLE QUOTES THE SPEECH GIVEN BY A LEADING MEMBER OF THE PEKING PARTY

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COMMITTEE (WU TEH) SCOLDING THE RITERS FOR ATTEMPTING TO CREATE A POLITICAL INCIDENT IN ORDER TO UNDERMINE THE MOVEMENT TO CRITICIZE "CAPITALIST ROADER TENG HSIAO-PING", AN INTERPRETATION OF THE INCIDENT WHICH THE ARTICLE CALLS TOTALLY FALSE.

6. THE SAME ARTICLE SAYS THE GANG SHOWED THEY WERE UTTERLY WITHOUT SHAME WHEN THEY STAGED PERFORMANCES TO "COMFORT" AND GIVE AWARDS TO THOSE INVOLVED IN SUPPRESSING THE RIOT. THIS CRITICISM PROBABLY REFERS TO THE MASS RALLY ON APRIL 26, 1976 TO RECEIVE THE MILITIAMEN, POLICEMENT AND PLA WHO HAD "ACHIEVED MERITS" IN THE CRACKDOWN.
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THOSE PRESENT, APART FROM THE GANG, INCLUDED HUA, CHEN HSI-LIEN, CHI TENG-KUEI, WANG TUNG-HSING, WU TEH, SU CHEN-HUA, AND NI CHIH-FU. WU AND NI WENT TO HOSPITALS TO VISIT MILITIAMEN WOUNDED IN THE RIOT.

7. THE ARTICLE PRAISES YEH CHIEN-YING AND LI HSIEN-NIAN FOR THEIR RESISTANCE TO THE GANG'S PUSH FOR AN INVESTIGATION OF THE INCIDENT, NOTING THAT YEH FEIGNED ILLNESS AND LI "RETREATED TO THE BACKGROUN AND MADE VERY FEW APPEARANCES." THE ARTICLE POINTEDLY NOTES THAT CHEN HSI-LIEN TOOK UP YEH'S WORK IN HIS ABSENCE, IMPLYING THAT HE DID NOT RESIST THE GANG.
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